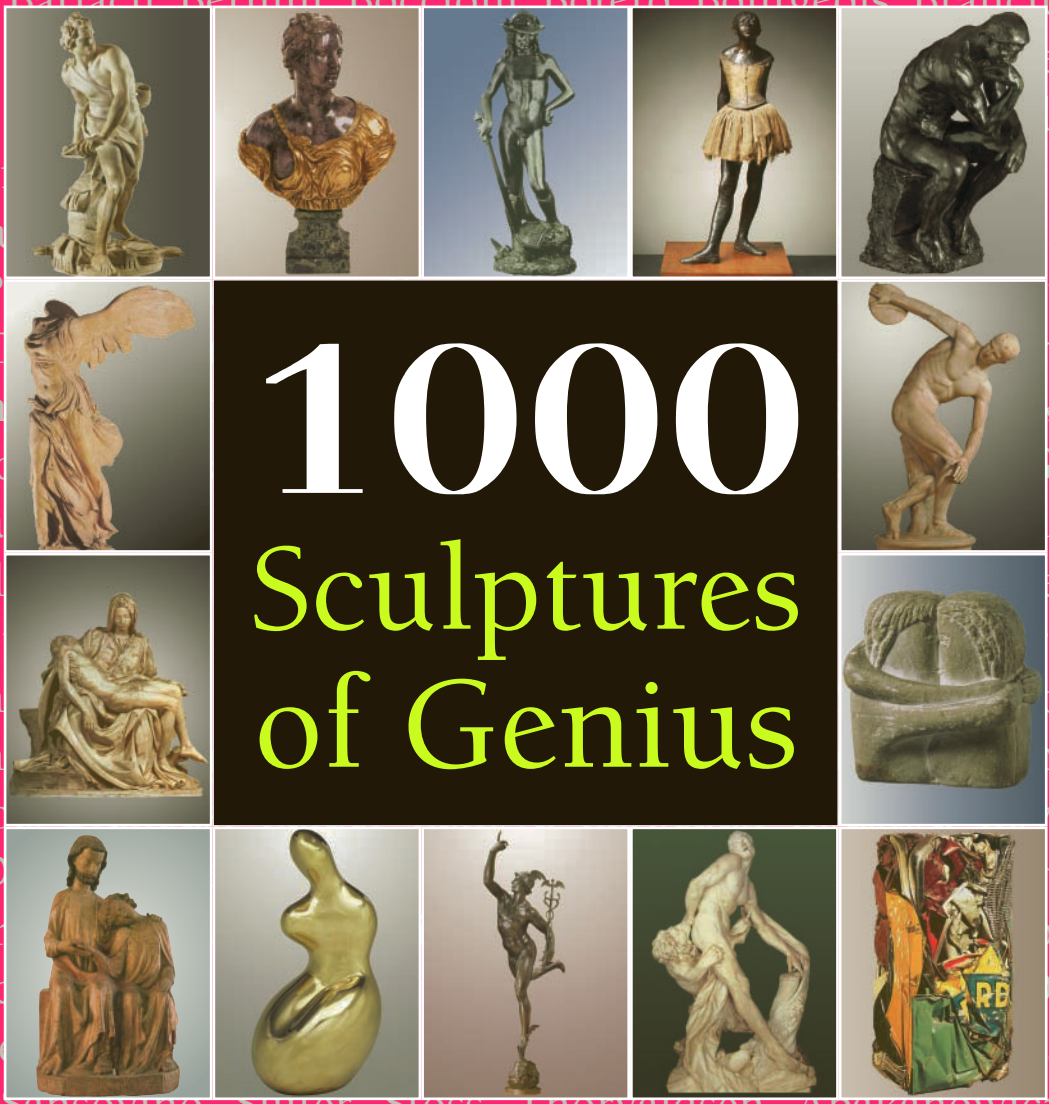
1000
Sculptures
of Genius

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1000 Sculptures of Genius

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Contents

Introduction

The Classical World

The ancient Greeks, at first an isolated and provincial people among many population groups in the Mediterranean basin, rose to cultural, military, and political prominence, but they stood on the shoulders of giants and learned from the traditions of other ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern civilisations. In the sphere of the arts, the Egyptians, in particular, had already developed a culture of idealised, well-proportioned human figures, a narrative tradition in painting and relief sculpture, and temple architecture that incorporated the display of a variety of sculptural elements. Yet the Greeks, in altering the static forms of the Egyptians, sought to craft sculptural figures that expressed life, movement, and a more fundamental and humane sense of moral potential. This development is seen in its early phase in the growing naturalism and subtlety of facial expression in sculpture produced in the Archaic period of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.E. greater freedom of invention appeared during that time in vase painting, but sculptors, restrained by the intractability of stone and by convention, lagged somewhat behind. Reflecting a philosophical search for the ideal, the sculptors aimed at achieving timeless beauty. Just as Greek philosophers considered the nature of the ideal republic, perfect justice, or the ideal Good itself, artists brought forth a host of perfected forms. In their subject matter, sculptors often favoured the naked, youthful male body, a reflection of the Greek penchant for athleticism and military prowess, and an indication of the fluid boundaries of their range of sexual appreciation. A widespread and important form was the *kouros*, a free-standing male figure often placed at tombs in honour of the deceased. *Kore*, female equivalents of the *kouroi*, were clothed, following the convention of the time, but equally focused on youth, charm, and ideal beauty.

During the fifth century B.C.E. a mood of great confidence developed among the Athenian people, spawned by their victory over the Persians in 490-479 B.C.E. and by continued Athenian leadership among the collected Greek city-states. Indeed, the Athenian leader Perikles, in his famous oration (431 B.C.E.) for soldiers fallen in the Peloponnesian War, affirmed the superiority of Athens in cultural affairs, stating that their dedication to citizenship, sacrifice, and intellect formed the moral core of Athenian greatness. This was a moment of revolution in artistic style. Ever more explicitly based on the ideals of the perfect body, sculptured figures expanded in movement and emotion, but always with a moderating balance of weight, proportion, and rhythm. Equally important was the sense of palpable reality; sculpture, rather than being made of unadorned marble or bronze, was often enhanced by details in other media to achieve, in restrained fashion, an extra degree of naturalism. In later eras, a belief in the "purity" of the art of the Greeks led critics to overlook these additions, but the Greeks themselves gave life to their figures by painting on the marble key parts such as lips or eyes; in bronze sculpture, the highest and most enduring form of artistic technique, one found such additions as glass eyes and silver eyelashes. Later Greeks and Greek colonists would make a specialty of coloured terracotta figurines. The realm of ancient Greek sculpture was a lively and at times colourful world.

In Classicism, beauty bears a numerical component. Just as musical intervals and chords could be defined proportionally through the ratio of numbers, and

geometry and mathematics informed planetary movements, similar proportional aspects found a place in Greek sculptural and architectural design. Polykleitos' *Canon*, or *Spear-bearing Youth*, was only the most prominent of many works informed by proportional ideals: the ratio of lengths of fingers, hands, arms, legs, and heads were adjusted to stand in relationship to other parts and the whole. We know of his system in part from a description by Galen, a medical doctor who lived in the second century A.D. Galen discussed Polykleitos' artistic system, and seemed to accept the idea that the human body truly comprises a set of ideal proportions. This principle would endure throughout the history of art; Classicism in the Renaissance and neoclassical periods would also incorporate some kind of mathematical or numerical system of proportionality.

The Greek city-states were weakened by warfare during the fourth century B.C.E., although striking developments in their sculptural traditions continued unabated, the works of that time were enhanced by a new sense of elegance and spatial play. By the end of the century, faced with powerful opposition, the Greek city-states had lost their independence and were united by the Macedonians under Philip II and Alexander the Great. Greek citizens were incorporated into a far-flung empire that occupied lands from Italy to the edge of India, and even after the division of this empire into various kingdoms, the various Greek city-states remained parts of larger political entities. Such dramatic changes could only lead to a changed perception of one's place in the universe, and it is hardly surprising that novel artistic results occurred in all of the visual arts. One new strain was a pragmatic, realistic attitude that seemed to respond to the new *Realpolitik* of changing conditions, in which the ideal of local democracy was shattered. In the new state of things, the individual had to get by in a difficult, changing, and dynamic world. The Hellenistic period saw the diffusion of genre scenes, some of which were of great pathos: an old woman struggling to walk to market, tired boxers, children tussling, dwarves dancing. New expressionistic details can be found in Hellenistic figures, particularly in the distinctive muscular types with large muscles, thick proportions, deep-set eyes, and thick, curling, moving hair. The older types of sculptural projects – frieze reliefs, tympanum sculpture, and free-standing figures – continued, but new settings and types arose. In the great Altar of Zeus at Pergamon (see nos. 110-111), rather than a narrow frieze set above, there is a large-scale relief scene below, bringing the gigantic battle scene down to the viewer's own level. The size of public sculpture increased over earlier periods of Greek art, and the Colossus of Rhodes, dominating the harbour, became an early tourist site.

The Greek colonies in the Italian peninsula had set the stage for the advance of the figural arts there. The Etruscans, a still relatively mysterious people, adopted some of the figural modes learned from the Greeks. The spectacular rise of the Romans started out as one of military and political triumph. The story is well known of how a small city-state grew to dominate the peninsula, and then came to create a great empire that stretched from Scotland to North Africa to Mesopotamia. The most striking of the Roman sculptural products during the centuries before the Empire were in portraiture; the unflinching realism of Roman republican portraiture reveals the character and moral fibre of those who were developing a political and social system of great strength and promise.

Iconographic change in sculpture followed the political development and expansion of the Empire. The establishment by Augustus (died 14 A.D.) of an imperial regime called for a new manner of imperial portraiture, and the changing styles and approach of these images of rulers stand at the core of the development of Roman portraiture. The divine status of the emperor and the propagandistic display of his likeness in public spaces

provided opportunities for Roman sculptors and designers of coins and medals. There arose a vast new array of new monument types, and sculpture appeared on triumphal arches, on towering columns, and at the baths, *fora*, and elsewhere. The Romans were willing, when they were not relying on their own inventions, to erect copies of Greek works, or to proudly display the originals themselves that had been purchased or plundered from Greece. These Greek copies and originals in turn served as artistic inspirations and helped maintain a high standard of quality in Roman sculpture. Some Roman emperors, such as Marcus Aurelius, consciously appropriated Greek ideals; he sported a beard in the Greek fashion and adopted Stoic philosophy, and his sculptors responded with idealising and classicising works, the most memorable being the equestrian monument placed on the Capitoline Hill. This work is in bronze, a favoured material of the Greeks that also became highly desirable to the Romans.

Roman people of all social classes were surrounded by high-quality sculptural originals, as the Roman state wanted to leave its stamp on public sites, including provincial ones. The baths (*terme*) were a frequent location for sculptures, many of them free-standing figures on athletic themes. The exterior of the Colosseum was adorned with sculptural figures standing in its open arches and a colossal statue of the Emperor Nero adjacent to the amphitheatre (later turned into a sun god by Nero's unadmiring successors). The rediscovery of the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the eighteenth century led to an increase in knowledge of the placement and type of sculptural figures used in Roman cities, and confirmed the literary evidence that much statuary was displayed in the *atria* of urban homes, as it was in the villas and vast country gardens of the aristocratic classes. Cicero, like other cultured contemporaries, formed what were essentially small museums in his villas, inside and out, and these served as places of retreat and philosophical contemplation. Emperors, too, populated their villas with grottoes, fountains, and reflecting pools that were surrounded by sculpture. Knowledge of these villas from ruins and from verbal descriptions was vital in shaping the gardens of Europe in the Renaissance and later. The Romans developed a vigorous sculptural tradition surrounding the rituals of death and mourning, and their funerary portraits and sarcophagus reliefs provide a rich legacy of artistic history.

During the last centuries of its existence, the Roman Empire slowly went into decline militarily, economically, culturally, and morally. The amphitheatres and their bloody games gained in popularity, while traditional athletics (running, javelin throwing, discus throwing) fell into desuetude. Dramatic theatre in the traditional sense all but disappeared, and poetry and prose lost much in the way of refinement. For its part, Roman sculpture of the second to the fifth centuries showed a gradual decline, and figural ideals and proportions ultimately handed down from the Greeks gave way to blunt, mundane, and stocky types that conveyed stature and power. Constantine the Great (died 337 A.D.) was the first Roman emperor to accept Christianity, which had hitherto, with varying degrees of intensity, been persecuted in the empire. The early Christians generally shared the artistic materials and style of the secular Romans, while introducing religious imagery.

The Collapse of Rome and the Rise of Medieval Culture

The destruction of the civilisation of the Roman Empire at the hands of the tribal Visigoths, Ostragoths, Vandals, and others in the fifth and sixth centuries brought an end to long cultural traditions. Some of the migratory peoples brought with them a kind of art based on small scale, intertwining, and animal motifs, with only a rather stylised human presence. The Vikings, no less than the

others, practised a style alien to ancient Mediterranean traditions. For its part, the Roman tradition, which remained dormant for over two centuries before being revived by Charlemagne (Charles the Great; died 814), who consciously brought back ancient Roman styles of script, architecture, sculpture, and manuscript illumination, all in what seems to us as provincial variant at best, and hardly taking a new direction. The Ottonian style of a century or so later was less linked to Roman models, but perhaps equally vigorous and forcible in attempting new narrative force and figural presence.

Although Europe was weakened by invasions from Vikings, Magyars and others towards the end of the first millennium after Christ, a great stabilisation of European society took place toward the year 1000, and civilisation began to flourish. The feudal system was well established, and Christianity had become mature in its institutions and was leading the way in education and in shaping the codification of both civil and canon law. Society was secure enough that trade could take place on land and sea, and the faithful could take long pilgrimages to distant sites. Places where holy relics were located – blood from the body of Christ, pieces of the True Cross, the mantle of the Virgin, bones of a saint – became pilgrimage destinations, and the internationalisation of culture grew as pilgrims travelled the continent. The holy destinations for these religious tourists called for a new manner of sculptural presentation, and there was a re-adaptation of the ancient Roman system of using abundant sculptural decoration on exteriors, as occurred early in the Romanesque period at the Cathedral at Modena. Builders turned also to a utilisation of Roman architectural ideas, including the construction of thick masses of wall and the use of rounded arches and barrel-vaults, and thus the later word "Romanesque" is used to indicate this use of ancient Roman ideas in a new context. For their part, certain sculptors made very close copies of Roman works, or even (with architectural sculpture) re-used Roman "spoils", that is, items salvaged from the rubble and prized for their beauty. At the church of SS Apostoli, the Florentines used one ancient capital found in local Roman ruins and made faithful copies to create a nave in the antique taste. This was a rebirth of the arts, if not a Renaissance, but the movement was international and there was a recognisable similarly of style, despite local variations, from Spain to England.

The Gothic period in the arts continued under many of the same social and cultural conditions as the Romanesque. The Church increased its strength, economies continued to grow, and the aristocratic feudal class continued to exert dominance. A number of artistic forms did change, however. Now rejecting antiquity as a model, the builders of this new age came up with their own solutions, an *ars nova* that differed from the heavier, stable Romanesque style. The development of the pointed arch, ribbed vaulting, flying buttresses, and great masses of fenestration in ecclesiastical architecture was in response to the desire for light, to create a jewel-studded Heavenly Jerusalem in the interiors. Abbot Suger (died 1151) of Saint-Denis (outside the walls of medieval Paris) led the way intellectually with his architectural patronage, and over time the new style swept Europe. Another ecclesiastical institution that gained in stature during the Gothic period was the monastery. Fairly powerful in earlier times, monasteries made even greater gains in moral and economic influence. The growth of monasteries, built with orderly planning and hierarchical and sensible arrangement of buildings, was one of the striking developments of the period, although this is often overlooked because the material remains of these great establishments have survived in rather poor or fragmentary state. Throughout this period the monarchies of Europe continued to strengthen, and the fabulous wealth achieved by the French kings and their relations, such as Jean, Duc de Berry, found an outlet in ambitious artistic commissions.

The Church continued to have a dominant role in education, and it oversaw the development of the universities. There was a growing voice for nominalism, in which the primacy of the senses and the priority of material existence played a leading role, and this philosophy is ideologically linked to a growing naturalism in the visual arts. The softening of the features of carved figures and the rendering of ease of posture show a new sharpness of vision and a willingness to consider the real as well as the ideal aspects of the visual world. The Church's assertive role included the moral leadership during the Crusades, the raising of armies to occupy the Holy Land. Despite the Crusades, and in part because of them, the medieval period saw the introduction of ideas in philosophy and science from Islamic thinkers, enriching Western thought. The revival of formal types located in the Holy Land, especially as found in the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, left a lasting mark on medieval and Renaissance architectural iconography.

The later Middle Ages played out against a backdrop of great drama: the Black Death, the plague that destroyed much of the population of Europe, occurred between 1348-1351, and in many places it threw society into upheaval. The ruling feudal class survived, but the labouring class gained some social strength, and the growth of cities and the clout of the bourgeoisie accelerated. This power of the merchant classes was especially strong in Italy, where the city-states flourished and feudal and agricultural power waned, and Italian cities saw the rise of a new secular and urban class of leaders. This was accompanied also by a secularisation of society, which took place in the growth of vernacular Italian literature (Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio) and by explorers and travellers such as Marco Polo. This was the proto-Renaissance that would explode in the fifteenth century into a powerful surge of secular and classical revival ideas.

Renaissance and Baroque Europe: Naturalism and the Revival of Antiquity

The world of Renaissance Europe was dominated by the spirit of humanism. Humanists, that is, scholars interested in the moral and literary values found in ancient Greek and Roman literature, turned their attention to rediscovery of ancient texts, useful not only for the study of good grammar and writing, but newly valued for the content itself, throwing light on the past experiences and thoughts of an elevated, lost civilisation. Renaissance critics regarded the Gothic style as a corruption, and gave us the word *Gothic* itself, which is historically inaccurate but reflected the belief that those who developed the pointed arch and the "barbarous" accretion of ornaments on the exteriors of the great northern European cathedrals were of the same low calibre as those who had earlier destroyed the Roman Empire.

Following the lead of the humanists themselves, others – businessmen, lawyers, political rulers, and eventually church leaders and clerics – rediscovered the marvels of antiquity. For certain fields of endeavour, such as medical science and painting, there were scant remains from ancient societies, but sculpture was one field where the remains were plentiful, from triumphal arches to sculpture fragments, from sarcophagi to small bronzes. Fifteenth-century sculptors who wanted to turn to antiquity for inspiration could easily do so. To their credit, nearly all Renaissance artists, in whatever medium they worked, tended to re-interpret and re-use material from the past rather than slavishly copy. There were isolated instances where artists repaired (and therefore matched the style of) ancient works, and some artists made close versions of them, as did the aptly named Antico (Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi), a sculptor in the employ of Isabella d'Este, or as did the young Michelangelo, who made certain youthful pieces close enough to antiquity to deceive connoisseurs. And it was

not only antiquity that served as a model: many artists turned to nature itself for inspiration, as recommended by contemporary humanists, and they also benefited from knowledge of other European artistic traditions closer to their time. Many sculptors, in fact, kept alive to some extent the spirit of the Gothic style, as did Luca della Robbia and Andrea del Verrocchio, whose art possesses a sweetness and elegant turn of line that owes something to late Gothic traditions.

The Renaissance was the age of investigation, travel accounts, map-making, history writing, and nature poetry, among other new secular trends, part of what the historian Jacob Burckhardt called the "rediscovery of the world and of Man". In the sphere of the sculptor, life models, careful observation of human movement, and anatomical study all helped the artistic cause. That a sculptured figure appeared alive and ready to speak was what gained the highest praise from critics of the time. Contemporary humanists recommended that artists look at nature, but look at it in its best forms: sculptors and painters were asked to choose the finest parts of different sources to create a beautiful work of art. Nor should good proportions be overlooked; as in antiquity, the harmony between part and part was an essential goal of a sculptor. Leon Battista Alberti, whose small treatise *On Sculpture* was the first of its kind since antiquity, set out in detail how to create a finely-proportioned sculptural figure.

There were different phases of the Renaissance, and the kind of classical art that inspired and was re-utilised differed according to the times and the interpreters. In the early Renaissance, the art of Roman republican sculpture was admired. Donatello and Nanni di Banco liked the details and the tough moral character of these prototypes and re-interpreted this in their sculptures. Later in the Renaissance, Michelangelo turned to Hellenistic Greece and its broad, muscular figures and extravagant theatricality. When the *Laocoön*, one of the prime works of antiquity, was rediscovered in 1506, Michelangelo sketched it, and soon incorporated the serpentine twists and anguished expressions into his Judeo-Christian subject matter. Other Renaissance sculptors were interested in the calm, classical style invented in the fifth century B.C.E. and its later variants from antiquity.

An important aspect of the social and artistic fabric of Renaissance Europe was formed by the papacy. During the later Middle Ages the papacy was divided. This was the Great Schism of the western Church, and at times multiple popes were recognised; the Palais des Papes in Avignon superseded the Vatican in Rome as a papal site. In 1417 the schism was healed and Martin V brought the papacy back to Rome. For centuries, strong papal leaders – Niccolo V, Innocent VIII, Julius II, with Leo X perhaps chief among these as art patrons – became leaders in art patronage. Later in the baroque period this rebuilding would continue, and the popes continued to act like secular rulers, with large incomes to spend on art works, distribute to favourites, or divert to military campaigns. In the fields of sculpture, the bronze doors of St Peter's by Filarete, the tomb of Innocent VIII by Antonio Pollaiuolo, and the commissioning of medals and other figures by Benvenuto Cellini were part of this papal re-establishment in Renaissance Rome.

The Mannerist style, the stylised art made in Italy in the sixteenth century, was unthinkable without the idealising lead of the high Renaissance masters, but the goals of the Mannerists were somewhat different. Fostered especially by connoisseurs and by courtly patrons, the Mannerist sculptors achieved a cool elegance and sometimes an icy formalism rather different from the more emotive and effectively passionate works from earlier in the sixteenth century. Giambologna experimented with the creation of sculpture meant to be seen from multiple directions, whereas most earlier sculptors had concentrated one's

attention on a single effective viewing point, or a constricted range of viewing stance. Along with the Mannerist artistic attitude went a social attitude that favoured variety, extravagance, inventiveness, grace, and self-consciousness. The autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, filled with colourful events, bravado, and bragging, is the perfect complement to his artistic career. The line between Mannerism and the high Renaissance is not easy to draw, and the "Mannerists" themselves were not always aware of their place in the artistic scheme later codified by modern art historians. The Mannerists thought that they were surpassing nature with idealising, well-studied and varied figures, goals also shared by earlier artists.

The seventeenth century, the age of the baroque, was marked by a number of social changes: the struggles between religions led to the Counter-Reformation, the spread of Catholic missions around the world, scientific exploration of the heavens and into the particulars known from microscopes, and continued discovery of the peoples and places of the earth, all of which increased mankind's sense of its own potential. The expansive and new investigative mentality was echoed by an underlying naturalism in sculpture and a rejection of the artificialities of Mannerism, which were swept away by dramatic baroque figures in action, sometimes realistically "staged" in grand palatial, urban, or ecclesiastical settings. Gian Lorenzo Bernini dominated the sculptural scene in baroque Rome with his sculptures of swooning saints, complex fountains, and army of saints at the piazza of St Peter's, a project carried out by Bernini and his large workshop. Throughout Europe, Mannerist niceties and clever details were replaced by the broader and more emotional new style.

As in politics, Louis XIV of France had a major impact on the arts. The Sun King, who effectively ascended to power in 1661, fancied himself the paragon or spiritual heir of Apollo and Alexander the Great, and he favoured Classicism in the arts; this was reflected in his sculptural commissions as well as those for architecture and painting. Louis favoured a rather bombastic and heavy version of Classicism, as evinced by the extant architecture, interior decoration, and garden design at Versailles, a glorified hunting lodge that he turned into a centre of power. When Louis died, a certain relief set in among the aristocrats of France. Courtiers moved from Versailles to newly-constructed *hôtels particuliers* in Paris. A smaller-scale taste took over, and decorations became lighter and airier, the style of the so-called rococo. This word, which was coined later by, it seems, pupils in the circle of the neoclassicist Jacques-Louis David, indicates that the art was a cross between *barocco*, the baroque, and *rocaille*, or pebble (or shell) work, and was a light version of the baroque. Practised by Clodion (Claude Michel) and an army of craftsmen who formed the interiors of the period, the rococo flourished particularly in noble country houses, city dwellings, and – perhaps most memorably – in church interiors. Born in France, the style flourished across Europe, and achieved its zenith in the Catholic church interiors of Austria and southern Germany.

The eighteenth century was an age of scientific advancement and discovery, and it turned out that the frilly rococo was not suited to every locale and patron. It never took root in England or America, where the taste in sculpture was leaning heavily towards copies of the antique, a taste gained from Englishmen's exposure to antiquity while on the Grand Tour. Copies after the Italian Renaissance sculptors were also quite in vogue in England, and when the native genius expressed itself it was, not surprisingly, in forms reminiscent of antiquity, as in the art of John Flaxman. The English made a specialty of forming natural and apparently spontaneous gardens, and sculptures after the antique often found their place in these landscape gardens.

The Modern Age: From Neoclassicism to the Twentieth Century

The emphasis on virtue in the eighteenth century was hardly compatible with the delights of the rococo, and eventually something had to change. As it turned out, Classicism was once again seen as the salvation of Western art. Neoclassicism became widespread, inspired in part by the rediscovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and fostered by the thirst for Virtue, which was deemed to be embodied in the calm and moderate sculpture of antiquity. The neoclassical movement was ripe for success, and it swept across Europe and America and beyond. It was fed and fostered by a number of events and movements: the Grand Tour, the rediscovery of buried Roman cities, an education system that put an emphasis on the study of the antique, the sheer exhaustion with the late baroque and rococo... all of this nurtured a movement that dominated in architecture, sculpture, and the decorative arts, and had a major impact on painting.

A number of political regimes utilised the classical style to garner public support. This was hardly a new practice, as a number of Italian Renaissance rulers had done the same. Such a practice linked the new regimes to a long-standing tradition that was enlightened, virtuous, steeped in democratic values, favourable to education, and stood at the apex of secular culture among world civilisations. The French revolutionaries immediately embraced the developing neoclassical style, and Napoléon continued to do so, linking himself to Roman imperial iconography. The American Revolution and its aftermath led to an adoption of classical reference to the Greek and Roman form of government, but the English themselves provided the background for this and had already incorporated the new classical ideas into their sculptural traditions and other art forms. Every country or regime, in somewhat nuanced versions, shared in this Neoclassical style. The international character of it was the product of the exchange of artistic ideas and the mining of the same ancient sources.

Another international style, Romanticism, unfolded during the nineteenth century against a backdrop of growing industrialism, democracy, and disillusionment by some with the results of those economic and political developments. The romantics explored the world of the irrational, the distant, and the bizarre, and their art often appealed to those disenfranchised by the societal progress and change being experienced in Western culture. Some of this thinking continued later in the century and beyond, and one can argue that romanticism continued – and continues – to inform modern thinking and artistic solutions.

The late nineteenth-century world of thought put forth a number of attempts to explain the world, and the recognition of the power of irrational or hidden forces, whether in Freud, Nietzsche, Jung, or Marx, gave rise to artistic manifestations. Paul Gauguin, who explored (and exploited) the stylistic and iconographic world of the South Pacific islands, is an example of this anti-bourgeois trend. Even before Darwin, the world of animals had great appeal among the romantics. Darwin, in his *On the Origin of Species* (1859), linked *homo sapiens* to the animal world genealogically, and during his time and earlier one could read of the importance of animals and animals' spirits in the works of Romantic poets and prose writers; animals were recognised as knowing and passionate, and their emotions linked to those of humans, a theme already explored by Leonardo da Vinci, Charles Le Brun, and other artists. The sculpture of Antoine-Louis Barye express this interest in the passions of the animal world, in a vivid trend also explored by painters such as George Stubbs, Eugène Delacroix, and Henri Rousseau.

The late nineteenth century was a time of great cultural and societal change, and some artists seemed to respond to this and produce an art as revolutionary as the new ideas in science, philosophy, and psychology.

Auguste Rodin, for example, moved in the direction of modernism in the later nineteenth century, but many sculptors in different countries favoured a more studied, academic, and traditional approach. Throughout Europe and America, traditional, academic sculpture found an admiring public, and many of these works still dominate their public sites, from the so-called *Eros* by Alfred Gilbert in London's Piccadilly Circus, via Edvard Eriksen's *Little Mermaid* in the harbour of Copenhagen, to New York's *Statue of Liberty* by Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi (see no. 725). This last colossal work is a remarkable specimen of academic Classicism, produced at a time when even the less avant-garde American school was ready to explore a variety of manifestations of early modernism.

The twentieth century was marked by a new subjectivity of thought, and old paradigms gave way to new. Einstein's theory of relativity overthrew more static beliefs in physics. The atonalist musical composers overthrew the old common system alive for four hundred years and shifted aural attention away from the keynote and musical scale. Psychoanalytical thinkers continued to undermine confidence in conscious thought and reason.

Even economists introduced new ideas of subjectivity into economic thinking, and saw prices as the result of shifting sentiment of supply and demand rather than based in firm factors such as the costs of production.

All of this was part of a new mentality that saw a dynamic universe, and artists shared in this new vision. Cubism is the most obvious participant of this novel thinking, and the focus on fragmentation, changing view point, and the re-assessment and re-evaluation of traditional artistic ideals continued to be widespread in the twentieth century.

From the abstractions of Umberto Boccioni and Jacques Lipschitz to the work of David Smith and Donald Judd, there was a nearly unbroken line of shared modernist taste. Yet such modernism was not without opposition in the twentieth century.

Indeed, even early in the century, in the midst of paradigm shift away from academic art and towards modernist solutions, the tragedy of World War I occurred, with tremendous loss of life bringing little change in advantage for either side. The war left a generation disillusioned, and the artistic movements of Dada and even Surrealism can be traced to this fall in confidence and darker vision. They even questioned the value of modernism itself, a challenge that would continue to the end of the century in the work of the post-modernists, who found in Dada a spiritual forerunner.

The abstract features of modernist thinking were also challenged by the Pop Artists in the 1950s and 1960s, who used everyday objects (or facsimiles of them) to comment on, among other things, modern consumer society.

Indeed, today's sculpture often finds expression in the form of ephemera that are raised to the level of high art: the found object of the early twentieth century is being renewed in the art of contemporary installations.

What is needed now is for architectural sculpture to return. Long banished by most modern architects, sculptural ornamentation has all but disappeared, to the detriment of society. The sense that form should follow function leaves little room for sculptural ornamentation, which had long been the jewel in crown of architectural construction. Perhaps a new generation of architects will once again embrace the use of carved or moulded ornament as a way to convey a sense of grace, beauty, and nobility.

Antiquity

As the ancient Greek city-states grew and evolved, the literary arts developed somewhat in advance of painting and sculpture. At about the time Homer was creating his epics, Greece saw the flourishing of the stylistic era identified as the Geometric period, lasting from about 950 to 750 B.C.E., a style dominated by rigid forms and in which the fluidity of the human figure was only just beginning to show itself. As the Greeks were increasingly exposed to foreign customs and material culture through trade, they were able to adapt and alter other artistic styles. The art of the Near East and of the Egyptians helped to shape Greek art of the Archaic period (c. 750 B.C.E. to 480 B.C.E.). During this time the Greeks began to infuse their figures with a greater sense of life, as with the famous "archaic smile" and with a new subtlety of articulation of the human body.

The remarkable evolution of Greek sculpture during the fifth century B.C.E. is unparalleled in artistic history. Innovations achieved during that time shaped stylistic development for thousands of years, and belong not to a people in one moment but to all of humankind. The development of weight-shift in a single standing figure and the concomitant torsion and subtlety of bodily stance were major aspects of this new style, but equally significant were the perfection of naturalistic forms, the noble calm, the dynamic equilibrium of movement, the harmony of parts, and the regulated proportions. All of this came to characterise the art of what we know as Classicism. The sculptors Polykleitos, Phidias (the sculptural master of the Parthenon project), and Myron worked in slightly divergent but compatible modes to achieve an art of moderation and perfection.

The fourth century B.C.E. saw an expansion of the artistic goals of the previous generations of Greek sculptors. Lysippos and Praxiteles softened the human form, and a nonchalant grace informs their figures. Artists in this period humanised the gods and added an element of elegance to their movement and expression. Sculptors of the fourth century B.C.E. increased the spatial complexity of the viewing experience: arms sometimes protrude into our space, groups are more dynamic in arrangement, and we benefit from walking around these sculptures and taking in the varied viewpoints.

The changes of the fourth century B.C.E. can hardly prepare us for the explosion of styles that occurred in the Hellenistic period, a time of exaggerations: extreme realism in rendering details and in capturing moments of daily life; great elegance of the female form, as we see in the memorable *Venus de Milo* (see no. 117) and *Nike of Samothrace* (see no. 106); and extreme muscularity of male figures in action. The beauty and refinement of the *Belvedere Apollo* (see no. 90), now in the Vatican collection, stand as a refined continuation of the earlier Greek ideals. On the other hand, the high relief figures from the altar of Pergamon, showing the battle of the gods and giants, are powerful in physique and facial expression, with deep-set eyes, thick locks of waving hair, and theatrical gestures. Later, Michelangelo and Bernini would draw inspiration from the Hellenistic works known to them from Greek originals and Roman copies.

The Romans always remained to some extent under the sway of the Greeks, but developed their own modes of sculptural expression. The most striking

See previous page:
1. **Anonymous.**
Iris, west pediment, Parthenon, Athens (Greece), c. 438-432 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 125 cm.
The British Museum, London (United Kingdom). Greek Antiquity.

of their early modes, not uninfluenced by Hellenistic models, was during the Republican period (until the second half of the first century B.C.E.). In an unforgettable development of the portrait type, Roman sculptors rendered searing details of facial particulars and created works conveying a strong sense of moral character, representing such virtues as wisdom, determination, and courage.

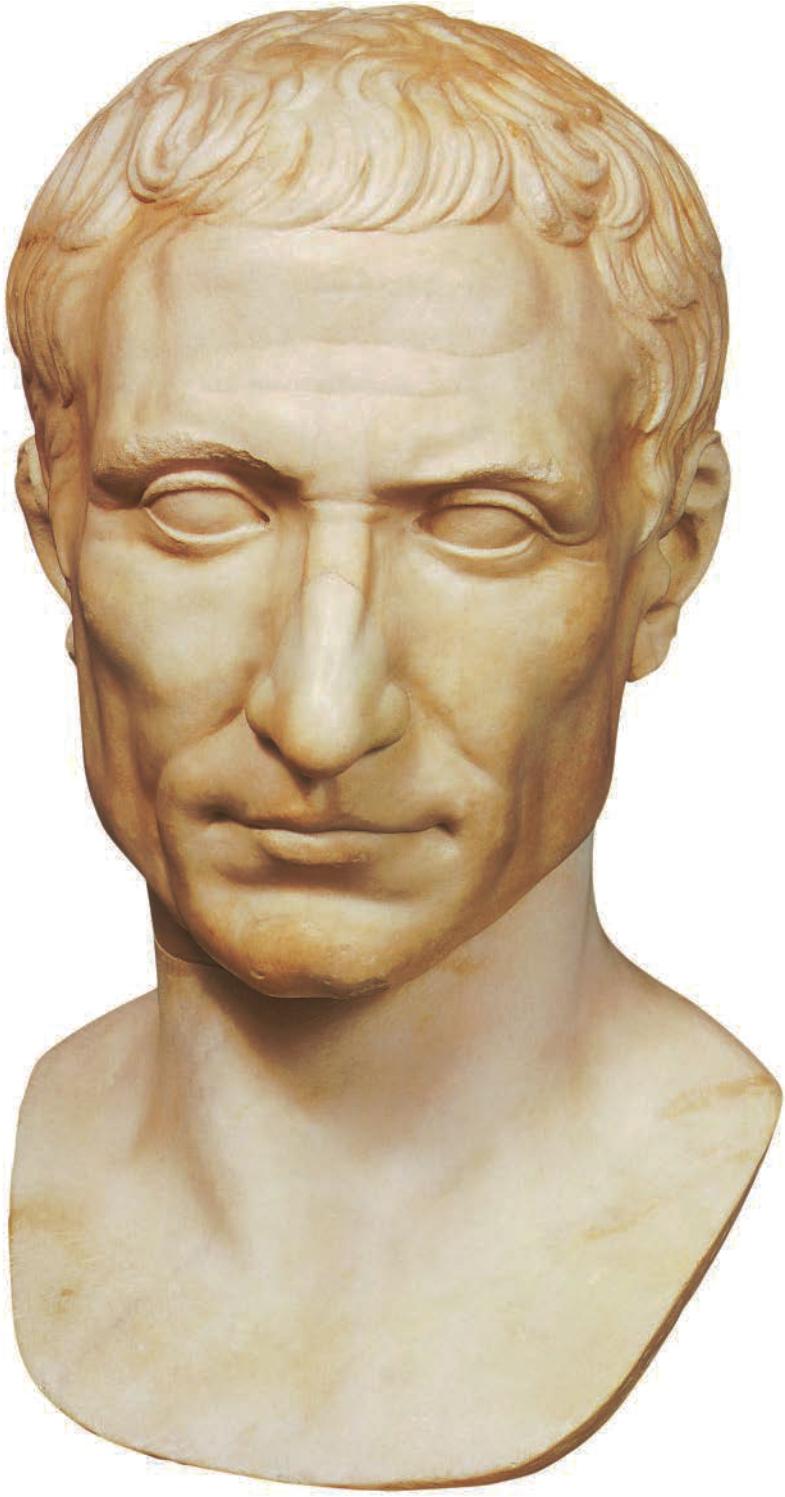
Around the time of Augustus a new kind of idealisation entered into Roman art, exemplified by the harmonious and flowing compositional arrangement of the reliefs on the Ara Pacis Augustae (see no. 126). A marble, standing figure of Augustus, the *Augustus Prima Porta* (see no. 121), is a Romanised version of Greek tradition, with the *contrapposto* (weight-shift) stance and the idealised, youthful face of the ruler. Less Greek in conception are the details of his armour and the heavy drapery style. Through the rest of the duration of the Roman Empire, there was a continuous artistic struggle, without resolution, between idealism and realism. The background to this battle was formed by the flood of Greek originals and Roman copies of them that filled the gardens, courtyards, and *fora* of the Romans, and these works ranged in style from the archaic to the Hellenistic.

Aside from any dependence on the Greeks, the Romans developed their own traditions, and were especially inventive in arriving at new stylistic expressions in their public monuments. The vigorous narrative and variety of the reliefs on the Arch of Titus still impress, and it is not surprising that they inspired Renaissance artists. No less remarkable are the intricate reliefs on the Column of Trajan and Column of Antoninus Pius. With scroll-like compositions, hundreds of figures adorn these columns in reliefs, showing military and – even more prominently – technological feats of the Roman armies. The figures seem large compared to their architectural surroundings, and the beginning of the "medieval" relationship of the figure to its spatial circumstances begins here.

The decline and fall of the Roman Empire formed a dramatic backdrop to the change of artistic style, including sculpture itself. By the late Empire of the third and fourth centuries A.D., at the time of the short-lived barracks emperors and during the experience of a host of troubles, portraiture achieved an extreme expression, sometimes capturing fear or cunning, and corresponding to the tenor of the times. The subjective question of the decline in style arises in a consideration of the Arch of Constantine (see no. 166): the side-by-side placement of earlier reliefs alongside those of the fourth century is telling in the squat proportions and repetitions of type and stance of the latter. Thus, even before the advent of Christianity, a decline in style and taste was present. This is no more evident than in the art of portraiture; the noble facial expression and the bodily idealism and harmony of the classical style have disappeared, and one sees instead nude figures with smaller heads and flat, broad chests.

The Christians, whose rise altered the character of Roman life, inherited the sculptural styles of the late Romans. Even some iconographic types were re-utilised; for example, Apollo-like features were given to Christ. Characteristic sculptural materials included an expansion of working in ivory, which remained a widespread medium in the Middle Ages. The Early Christian iconographic innovations were substantial, and a whole new range of subjects appeared in art. In the Eastern half of the fallen Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire would survive and persevere. Its sculptors retained features adapted from the late Roman style, and eventually the Byzantines would help to re-introduce some of the ancient Mediterranean artistic ideas into late medieval and proto-Renaissance Italy.

See next page:
2. **Anonymous**.
Portrait of Julius Caesar, c. 30-20 B.C.E.
Marble, 56 x 19 x 26 cm.
Musei Vaticani, Vatican City (Italy). Roman Antiquity. (*)



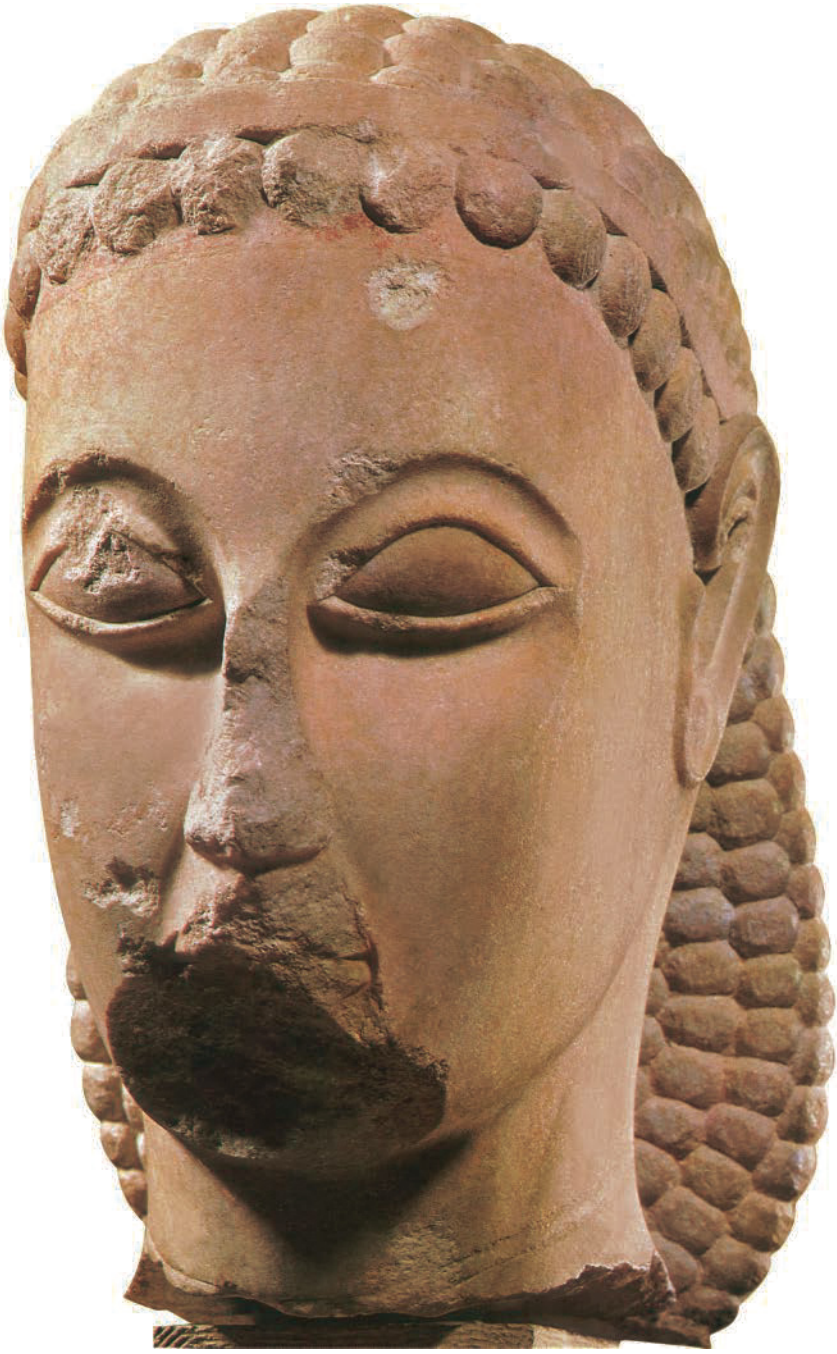
3. **Anonymous**.
The "Auxerre Kore", c. 640-630 B.C.E.
Limestone, h: 75 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (France). Greek Antiquity. (*)

4. **Anonymous**.
Kleobis and Biton, Apollo Sanctuary, Delphi (Greece),
c. 610-580 B.C.E. Marble, h: 218 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Delphi, Delphi (Greece). Greek Antiquity. (*)

5. **Anonymous**.
Moschophoros, called the *"Calf Bearer"*, Acropolis, Athens (Greece), c. 570 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 164 cm.
Acropolis Museum, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity.

6. **Anonymous**.
The Sounion Kouros, Temple of Poseidon, Cape Sounion (Greece), c. 600 B.C.E. Marble, h: 305 cm.
National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity.

7. **Anonymous**.
The Naxian Sphinx, Earth Sanctuary, Delphi (Greece), c. 560 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 232 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Delphi, Delphi (Greece). Greek Antiquity. (*)



8. **Anonymous**.
Dipylon Head, Dipylon, Athens (Greece), c. 600 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 44 cm.
National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity. (*)

9. **Anonymous**.
Kore dedicated to Hera by Cheramyes of Samos, c. 570-560 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 192 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (France). Greek Antiquity. (*)

10. **Anonymous**.
Ornithe, Geneleos Group, Heraion of Samos, Samos (Greece),
c. 560-550 B.C.E. Marble, h: 168 cm.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin (Germany). Greek Antiquity.

11. **Anonymous**.
Kore, Keratea, c. 570-560 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 193 cm.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin (Germany). Greek Antiquity.

12. **Anonymous**.
Kore 679, called the *"Peplos Kore"*, Acropolis, Athens (Greece), c. 530 B.C.E.
Marble, traces of painting, h: 118 cm.
Acropolis Museum, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity. (*)

13. **Anonymous**.
Kore 671, Acropolis, Athens (Greece), c. 520 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 177 cm.
Acropolis Museum, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity.

14. **Anonymous**.
Kouros, called the *"Apollo from Tenea",* c. 560-550 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 153 cm.
Glyptothek, Munich. Greek Antiquity.

15. **Anonymous**.
Head of a Cavalier called the *"Cavalier Rampin",* Acropolis, Athens (Greece), c. 550 B.C.E.
Marble, traces of painting, h: 27 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (France). Greek Antiquity. (*)

16. **Anonymous**.
Kouros, Asclepieion, Paros, c. 540 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 103 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (France). Greek Antiquity.

17. **Anonymous**.
Head of a Blond Youth, c. 485 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 25 cm.
Acropolis Museum, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity.

18. **Anonymous**.
Kouros, Agrigento, c. 500-480 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 104 cm.
Archaeological Museum, Agrigente (Italy). Greek Antiquity.

19. **Anonymous**.
The Kritios Boy, Acropolis, Athens (Greece), c. 480-470 B.C.E.
Marble, h: 116 cm.
Acropolis Museum, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity.

20. **Anonymous**.
Heracles, Temple of Portonaccio, Veii (Italy), 510-490 B.C.E.
Terracotta.
Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giula, Rome (Italy). Etruscan Antiquity. (*)

21. **Anonymous**.
Apollo, Temple of Portonaccio, Veii (Italy), c. 510 B.C.E.
Terracotta, h: 180 cm.
Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giula, Rome (Italy). Etruscan Antiquity.

22. **Anonymous**.
Warrior from Cerveteri, c. 530-510 B.C.E.
Terracotta.
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen (Denmark). Etruscan Antiquity.

23. **Anonymous**.
Athena introducing Heracles on Mount Olympus, c. 530-520 B.C.E.
Terracotta.
Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giula, Rome (Italy). Etruscan Antiquity.

24. **Anonymous**.
Young Girl running, pediment, Temple of Eleusis, Eleusis (Greece),
c. 490-480 B.C.E. Marble, h: 65 cm.
Archaeological Museum, Eleusis (Greece). Greek Antiquity.

25. **Anonymous**.
Kore 686, called *"The Sulky One"*, Acropolis, Athens
(Greece), c. 480 B.C.E., Marble, h: 58 cm.
Acropolis Museum, Athens (Greece). Greek Antiquity. (*)